



Columbus Day Weekend 2003

Welcome to Biscayne National Park

Ninety-five percent of Biscayne National Park's 173,000 acres are covered by water, making it a haven not only for wildlife, but also for boaters, divers and anglers. The park enables visitors to experience tranquility, scenic vistas, resource-based recreation and the underwater environment in ways unlike those available in the surrounding area. It can provide an opportunity to enjoy a quieter and less frenzied lifestyle; to experience a piece of "early Florida" in Miami's backyard.

Biscayne National Park is a place to share the wonders of the marine environment with family and friends. As you enjoy the beauty of your park's waters and islands, please remember the legacy past generations have handed down to you and help do your part to protect this special place for those who will come after you.



Stop by the visitor information
contact barge.
Look for lost swimmers here.

It is easy for swimmers to become separated from their boats. Many of the boats look the same.

Biscayne National Park has a lost swimmer barge where swimmers can get out of the water and rest. Captains are responsible for picking up lost swimmers at the barge. Park personnel are not responsible for returning lost swimmers to their boats.

The lost swimmer barge is located at the NW section of the anchorage. See the map on page 2.

Swimmers in the water at night are very difficult to see and are in danger of being struck by passing boats resulting in serious or fatal injury.

To locate lost swimmers, call (305) 230-1144 x 3012.

RESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN IT'S THE LAW

1. Captains do not boat when under the influence – BUI.
2. Captains are responsible for damage caused by their wakes.
3. Children under 6 years old on a boat 26' or less must wear a life jacket when the boat is underway.
4. Bow riding is prohibited by state law.
5. Boats running at night require red, green and white lights.
6. Boats on the water at night must display appropriate lights characteristic for the activity, i.e. underway, diving, fishing, at anchor, etc.
7. Before launching make sure the boat is equipped with required U.S. Coast Guard approved safety equipment, such as - but not limited to - PFDs, fire extinguishers, whistles, horns or bells, operating lights, and flares that are not expired.

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**In Case of Emergency
Contact
National Park Service Dispatch
at
305-247-7272
or
1-800-788-0511
or
U.S. Coast Guard
On Marine Channel 16**

Matheson
Hammock

Key
Biscayne

**Do Not Use
This Map
For Navigation**

Refer to NOAA Chart #11451
For Navigational Information

Park Boundary

Soldier Key

Biscayne National Park

**Restricted Area
No anchoring
Friday - Monday
October 10 - till
October 13, 2003**

A

25° 32.0'N
80° 15.0'W

B

25° 32.0'N
80° 11.4'W

C

25° 30.0'N
80° 15.0'W

D

25° 30.0'N
80° 11.4'W

East
Featherbed

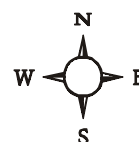
Boca
Chita Key

Sands Key

University Dock

Elliott Key

Elliott Key
Harbor and
Ranger Station



0 1 nautical mile 3

Black
Point

West
Featherbed

310°

130°

A

B

C

D

Lost Swimmer Barge

Anchorage Area

No rafts greater than
5 vessels.
Minimum of 75'
between rafts of vessels.
Effective
Friday through Monday,
October 10-13, 2003

Convoy Point
Homestead
Bayfront

Pelican Bank

Turkey Point
Power Plant

25° 25.6'N
80° 15.0'W

R "8"
(ICW)

Billys
Point

Caesar Creek

Stay Afloat Don't Drink and Boat



Alcohol is absorbed twice as fast at 93° as it is at 75°.

Be a Sober Skipper

The best thing that you can do for your safety and the safety of others is simple — Don't Drink and Boat!

Alcohol impairs your coordination, balance, vision, judgement and reaction time. The effects of alcohol are amplified by the "natural stresses" on the body while boating.

A few of the natural stresses are waves, wind, sun, dehydration, noise and motion of the boat. The body's absorption of alcohol increases as air temperature increases. For example, alcohol is absorbed twice as fast at 93 degrees as it is at 75 degrees.

BUI, Boating Under the Influence, was the #1 contributing factor in Florida recreational boating fatalities for 2000 & 2001. More than half of the deaths were passengers. Florida ranked number 3 in the United States in 2001 for the number of boating fatalities.

During the past six Columbus Day Holiday Weekends, 103 boaters were arrested for BUI in Biscayne National Park. During the 2002 Columbus Day Weekend there were 3 fatalities in Biscayne. In all of these fatalities alcohol was a factor. Don't be a statistic. Before getting underway appoint a **SOBER SKIPPER**.



Safe Navigation Around the Featherbeds

Don't spend your Columbus Day Weekend hard aground and all alone miles from the anchorage.

Always keep a visual look out. Do not rely on GPS information alone, or auto pilot.

Use your NOAA navigational chart to know where the channels are.

Don't follow the leader – other boats may not know where they're going and run aground.

During the Columbus Day Weekend there will be Coast Guard Cutters, and other agency boats helping you to safe, navigable channels.

National Park boats will be patrolling near the Featherbeds to keep you on track and heading towards the anchorage.

Keep speed low in congested areas such as the Intracoastal Waterway and East Featherbed cut. Numerous groundings happen in these locations.

Know what boats are to the side and behind you.

Watch for special white and orange buoys. Stop, turn around and avoid these areas near the Featherbed.



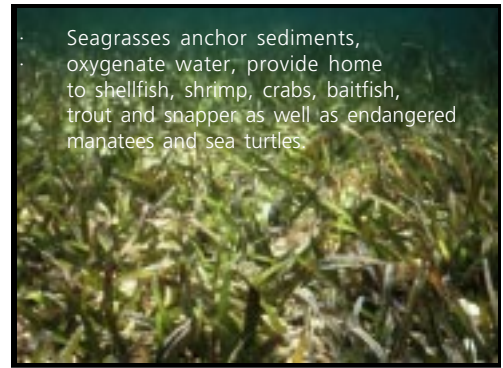
Annually, over 100 groundings occur in the Featherbed area of the park. Seagrass nursery meadows are disappearing in Biscayne National Park. These nursery meadows are important habitat for marine life and the commercial and recreational anglers who use these waters.

Personal
Water
Craft



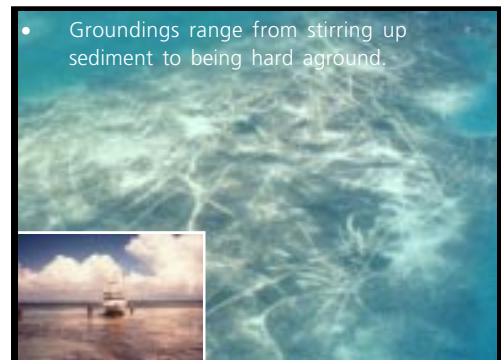
Prohibited
in
Biscayne
National
Park

An Investment Worth Protecting



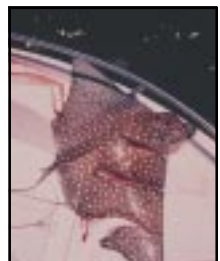
Seagrasses anchor sediments, oxygenate water, provide home to shellfish, shrimp, crabs, baitfish, trout and snapper as well as endangered manatees and sea turtles.

We Need Your Help!



- Groundings range from stirring up sediment to being hard aground.

- Groundings can damage resources and kill marine life like the spotted eagle ray in the photo to the right.



- Groundings can cause serious damage to the vessel and engine resulting in expensive repairs.



Groundings

Running aground can happen to anyone at anytime. Know what to do.

1. Use a navigational chart – NOAA Chart #11451.
2. Wear polarized sunglasses to help distinguish water color.
3. If you see a marker you are unfamiliar with, STOP! Markers serve as aids to navigation only if you know what they mean.
4. Don't power off. Wait for high tide and float off, or call for towboat assistance.

Marine Debris



Marine debris can result in costly repairs.

Don't Litter - Pack it Out

The waters of Biscayne National Park contain unique and diverse marine communities such as coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangrove fringes. Not only do visitors enjoy the natural beauty of the park but also many marine species call this special place home.

Marine debris is the result of littering. Last year, after the Columbus Day Weekend, park staff surveyed the Bay bottom near the center of the anchorage. The litter on the bay bottom in this area was 39 times greater than in other areas of the park. Don't throw or drop trash overboard.

Commonly found items in park waters and on the shore include plastic and glass bottles, shoes, light bulbs, oil canisters, floats, balls, fishing gear, crab traps, tires, refrigerators, 55-gallon drums, tarps, plastic sheeting, lumber, and discarded boat hulls.

Aside from affecting the natural beauty of the park, marine debris may hurt or kill wildlife. Seabirds, sea turtles, fish, and marine mammals may become entangled in marine debris or ingest plastic that they mistake for food, which can result in starvation through blockage of the intestinal tract. Heavy concentrations of debris on park beaches may also prevent endangered and threatened turtle species from nesting.



How can I help?

Leave no trace!

- Discard monofilament line only in containers like the one pictured to the right.
- Discard trash in appropriately marked containers.
- Stow materials securely on your boat to prevent being blown into the water.
- Encourage others to protect and preserve by keeping their national park clean.



Recycling containers are located at Biscayne's Convoy Point Jetty, Black Point & Homestead Bayfront Marinas.

Aircraft Overflights

During Columbus Day Weekend, airspace below 2,000 feet above ground level will be closed in a 4 nautical mile circle around University Dock. This area is where the anchorage is located. The airspace closure will allow safe and speedy response by life flights should an accident occur. Help us keep you safe by not flying over the anchorage. To report low flying and unsafe aircraft of any type please call (305) 242-7740 and report aircraft tail numbers.

An altitude of 500 feet above ground level must be maintained in all places in the park outside of the anchorage.

Drowning - Boating Accidents

In 2000 Florida ranked third in the nation for boating fatalities. Approximately half of these fatalities were due to drowning. The majority of drownings occurred between noon and 10:00 p.m. Males between the ages of 17 and 51 accounted for 93% of these fatalities. A large majority of boat operators involved in these fatalities were male with 55% of them having over 100 hours of operator experience. Alcohol and/or drugs were found in one third of the drowning victims. Wearing a personal floatation device (PFD) can prevent drowning.



Elliott Key Shoreline Water-walk

Stingrays, pipefish and jellyfish are just a few critters you might find when you join a ranger for a shoreline water walk along Elliott Key. Meet under the contact station on Elliott Key. Children 16 and under must wear a personal flotation device and be accompanied by a parent.

Shoreline walks are Sunday, October 12th. The morning walk starts 9:45 a.m. ending at 11:00 a.m. The afternoon walk starts at 1:00 p.m. and ends at 2:15 p.m. Walks are limited to 25 participants.



Stay Afloat Don't Drink and Boat

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Experience Your America



For additional information call
(305) 230-PARK (230-7275) or visit
www.nps.gov/bisc